

## School Illness Reporting is an Important Part of Iowa Respiratory Virus Surveillance

### What is the Iowa Surveillance Program?

The Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (Iowa HHS) works with multiple national, state, and local groups to monitor influenza and other respiratory virus activity in Iowa. Iowa's surveillance program summarizes all of this flu data in regular [reports](#) available to the general public. Health care providers also use this data to provide recommendations to their patients.

### Why Iowa HHS needs volunteer surveillance sites?

Individual cases of influenza are not required to be reported in Iowa, unless they meet other criteria to be reported (e.g., pediatric influenza death, potential outbreak, suspect novel influenza). For this reason, Iowa HHS relies on voluntary reporting from laboratories, schools, vital records, hospitals, care facilities, and outpatient health clinics to monitor influenza activity in Iowa.

### What are we asking schools to report?

Iowa HHS works with Iowa schools, local public health and the Iowa Department of Education to track and respond to reports of influenza (flu) and other illness in schools. This is done through two main systems: weekly illness and daily 10% illness.

#### Daily student absence due to illness of 10% or greater

Schools are asked to report absenteeism when 10% or more of the total enrollment is absent on any given day due to illness.

Link to school 10 percent illness reporting survey: <https://redcap.link/iowaschool10pct23-24>

#### Weekly school absence reporting

Iowa HHS is looking for schools to report the number of ill students each week. Schools submit the data through an online survey once a week regardless of the percentage of illness that week.

**We need schools all across Iowa to make sure our data represents every area.**

The first week - Provide some details about your school (name, district, location, grades, contact person at school) in addition to the number of students ill and expected to attend for each day of that week. When you submit the survey you will get a link that will fill in all of the school details for you and allow you to see which weeks you have already reported

Later weeks - you only need to report the number ill and enrolled.

If you want to see the survey visit <https://redcap.link/iowaweeklyschool23-24>. If you are willing to report illness weekly for your school, just complete the survey.

For more information about school influenza surveillance, please contact the influenza epidemiologist at the Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology at 515-322-1937 or [cade@ipdph.iowa.gov](mailto:cade@ipdph.iowa.gov).